

EXPLANATION OF THE BOOK

حَدِيْثُ طَالِبِ الْعِلْمِ

'Etiquette Of A Seeker Of Knowledge'

By Shaykh Bakr Aboo Zayd

Explanation by
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POINT THREE, p34: His saying: "a scholar cannot be considered a scholar"

Explanation

Means here a knowledgeable person - *Rabbaani*, as for being a knowledgeable person in opposition to being an ignorant person. This is said: The one who compiled the book "*Al Munjad*" is a Christian and he has great knowledge of Arabic language. Even though there are a great number of mistakes in it and things that go against him from aspects of the religion. But a knowledgeable person that acts upon his knowledge is truly known as a "*Rabbaani*" ¹ because he trains himself first, then others second.

So acting upon the knowledge is a must, because if he does not act upon his knowledge then he will be of those who are first being dragged into the fire.²

A poet said:

"The scholar that does not act upon his knowledge will be punished before those that worshipped idols"

If he does not act upon his knowledge he will inherit failure in his knowledge and no blessings in it and forgetfulness.

This is the meaning of Allaah, The Most High's saying:

"So because of their breach of their covenant, We cursed them, and made their hearts grow hard. They change the words from their (right) places and have abandoned a good part of the Message that was sent to them."

[Al-Maa'idah (5):13]

This forgetfulness includes both forgetfulness in mind, and action. It is also forgetfulness in respect of the religion ³ and forgetfulness of abandoning.⁴ The word for forgetfulness in Arabic generally means to leave. As for the one who acts upon his knowledge then Allaah increases him in guidance.⁵ This is the meaning of Allaah, The Most High's saying:

"While as for those that accept guidance, he increases their guidance and bestows on them their piety." [Muhammad (47): 17]

So Allaah increases him in *Taqwa*, ⁶ and that is why Allaah then says:

¹ T.N - Another description of '*Rabbaani*' is one who teaches the people the smaller knowledge before the larger. Being a *Rabbaani* is something praised by Allaah (subhaanahu wa ta'aala) as He said: "...and be you all **Rabbaanieen...**" Also Ali Ibn Abee Taalib (radyallaahu anhu) said "People are of three kinds a scholar (*Rabaani*), a student of knowledge and Rabble."

² T.N - This is based on the hadeeth, three people will be dragged to the hellfire first: a scholar, a mujaahid and one who gave lots of sadaqah. Allaah will ask the scholar: "Why did you attain a great deal of knowledge?" He will reply: "For your sake, O Allaah." Then Allaah will say to him: "Rather you did it so that it would be said so and so is a scholar - is knowledgeable - and it was said, so drag him to the hellfire..."

³ T.N - As mentioned in the verse above.

⁴ T.N - Like the saying "Oh just forget him for now.."

⁵ T.N - and memory as oppose to forgetfulness

⁶ T.N - *Taqwa* is obeying all that Allaah commands and abstaining from his prohibitions as mentioned in the hadeeth of Abu Hurairah when he was asked: "What is *Taqwa*?" He replied: "Have you ever walked down a narrow path where there are thorn bushes on

"... and bestows on them their piety." [Muhammad (47): 17]

If he acts upon his knowledge Allaah gives him Knowledge as long as he does not know (meaning has gaps in his knowledge).

That is why it was reported from Ali Ibn Abbee Taalib (may Allaah be pleased with him) that he said:

"Call out to the knowledge with action and it will either responds or depart."

The same thing was narrated with a different wording:

"The knowledge calls out to action, so it either answers the call or it departs."

This is something clear and easy to understand, because if you act upon your knowledge then you will remember it as long as you act upon it.⁷

By way of example: A man attains knowledge of the description of the prophets prayer from the Sunnah, he then acts upon it every time he prays. Is he going to forget that knowledge? No, because he repeats it often. But if he left the action he would forget it. So this is evidence that acting upon knowledge necessitates remembering of the knowledge.⁸

POINT FOUR: Continual Observance (of Allaah) Adorn yourself with the continual observance of Allaah.....

Explanation

This is imperative, constantly being aware that one is under the watchful eye of Allaah, and this is from the fruits of fearing Allaah. That a person is with Allaah, constantly worshipping Allaah as though he sees Him.⁹ When he stands up for prayer and performs ablution it is as though he is implementing the verse in the Qur'aan:

"O you who believe if you stand for prayers then wash your faces..."
[Al-Ma'idah (5):6]

And when he performs his ablution he does it as though he is watching the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) perform ablution and saying:

either side of you? That is taqwa." He meant avoiding the pricks from the thorns is like avoiding disobedience to Allaah, and Allaah knows best

⁷ T.N – A beautiful poem is worth mentioning here from Imaam Ash-Shaafi'ee (rahimahullaah) were he said: "I complained to Waqee about my lapse in memorisation, he instructed me to abandon sinning, and informed me that knowledge is light from Allaah and the light of Allaah is not given to a sinner."

⁸ T.N – The Jews did just the opposite they did not act upon their knowledge so Allaah made them forget it and cursed them. A very severe warning from Allaah comes in Soorah Mumtahinah where Allaah states: "**A similitude of those who carried the Towrah then they did not act upon it is like a donkey that carries books..**" [Al-Jumu'ah (62):5] Also the saying of Allaah, The Most High: "**O you who believe, why do you say that which you do not do, what a great sin it is with Allaah that you say what you do not do.**" [Soorah As-Saff (61): 2-3]

⁹ T.N – This is based on the hadeeth of Jibreel (alayhis-salaam) when he asked the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) about 'Ihsaan' he replied: "It is to worship Allaah as though you see Him and though you cannot see Him know that He sees you."

"Whoever performs ablution like my ablution....." ¹⁰

His saying: Journeying to your lord between fear and hope

Explanation

This is one of the opinions in this issue. That is, is it formerly upon a person to draw closer to Allaah between fear and hope, or should he fear Allaah more than hope in him, or should it be the opposite, and he hopes more than he fears?

Imaam Ahmad (may Allaah have mercy upon him) says:

"It is incumbent that his fear and hoping are one (balanced) if one was to overwhelm the other then that person would be destroyed."

Then there were some scholars that went into detail and said:

If you were preoccupied being obedient to Allaah, then your hoping should overwhelm, because if you actually implement it, Allaah would accept it from you and lift you degrees higher by it. If however, you were preoccupied in disobedience to Allaah then your fear of Allaah should overwhelm such that you do not fall into it. This is how one should overwhelm the other - in accordance to the condition of the person.

From other scholars there were those that explained it in another manner and said:

It depends upon the condition of the person, so it was said, as for the one in a condition of sickness, then the hoping should overwhelm, because the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Let none of you die, except that he has a good thought about his lord" ¹¹

This is because if fear was to overwhelm him in such a situation of sickness, then that may push him to lose hope in the mercy of Allaah. As for in the times of good health, then fearing Allaah should overwhelm, because good health is called to corruption as a wise poet once said;

"Indeed youth, spare time, and novelties are corruption for a person, great corruption." ¹²

That which I see correct is that a person must deal with his condition in accordance to his needs. The closest opinion to the truth is that, if he is doing good deeds then hoping should overwhelm him, and if he is preoccupied with disobedience then let him be overwhelmed by fear, this is what I see to be the best position in this dangerous and great issue.¹³

¹⁰ Ahmad, An-Nasaa'i, Abu Dawood, and it is in Saheeh Al Jaami (6176)

¹¹ Abu Dawood, Ahmad, and in Saheeh al Jaami (7792)

¹² T.N – Ibnu Abbaas (radiyallaahu anhu) said: The Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) was giving an exhortation or advice to a man, so he said to him: "Take benefit from five before five: your life before your death, your health before your illness, your spare time before you get busy, your youth before your old age and your wealth before your times of poverty." [Haakim 4/306] Also: "Two blessings that most people do not take heed of, health and spare time." [Bukhaaree 11/229,6412]

¹³ T.N – Dangerous because one could over depend upon the mercy of Allaah and accumulate sin, and lose hope in Allaah's mercy then disbelieve. As in the hadeeth of Ibnu Abbaas when the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said to him "Whoever says La

If a person says: Overwhelming of hope is it a must that it is built upon a pure/sincere reason for hope, or can it be a hope like that of the bankrupt. The answer is the former.

For example a man disobeys Allaah constantly and says: The mercy of Allaah is wide, expanse. This is wrong, because having a good thought about Allaah and hoping in Him is conditional upon a reason to build this good thought and hoping on. Otherwise it is just a false sense of security or wishing, as the general people of An Najd say: "Wishing is the capital (money) of the bankrupts" ¹⁴

POINT FIVE: Lower your wing, and put arrogance and pride behind you.... Adorn yourself with personnel etiquette....

Explanation

Because this station dictates that a student of knowledge will have abstinence from what the people have, and he will be modest and not look at the haraam, he will have gentleness and not be quick to punish one who does him wrong, and he will have patience during the trials that come to him from what he hears about himself, from the general people, his contemporaries, his teachers, so he should exercise patience and hope for reward and forgiveness.

Humbleness to the truth includes humbleness to the creation. So he should humble himself to the truth which means; when the truth becomes clear to him he submits to it and does not look for an alternative to it. And humbleness to the creation means accepting the truth from others. How many times has a student benefited his teacher by reminding him of something which had not come to his mind, and there was no jealousy felt by the teacher and no low opinion thought of the teacher.

His saying...And tranquility (by displaying awe, self possession, lowering ones wings.....

Explanation

This is also another adornment for a student of knowledge that he abstains from fickleness, whether it is whilst walking or dealing with people, and he should not indulge in boisterousness which kills the heart and removes dignity. He should bear the humility of adorning himself with manners that are befitting for a student of knowledge.

His saying: bearing the humility of learning for the glory of knowledge...

Explanation

Ilaaha Illa Allaah will enter paradise." Ibnu Abbaas said: "Should I not give glad tiding to the people?" The Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "No, because they will be lazy in their religion"

¹⁴ T.N – The Bankrupt is the one who is the greatest loser, as in the hadeeth of Abu Hurairah: "Do you know who the greatest loser (bankrupt) is?" We said: "Yes, the one who has no wealth and no belongings." He said: "It is the one who comes to Allaah with salaat, fasting, hajj, etc but he lied against this one, slandered that one, shed the blood of this one and so on... then his good deeds will be taken from him and given to those he oppressed, and if that is not sufficient for them their bad deeds will be taken from them and placed on him until they are made to enter the paradise and he is thrown in the hellfire." [Muslim]

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This is good, meaning, if you were to humble yourself for learning you will then search for the glory of this knowledge. Then the humbleness will be attained by knowledge and will produce good fruits.

His saying....Therefore be aware of all (the evil qualities) that oppose these qualities.....

Explanation

Suggestions of arrogance and pride to mankind, and of course students of knowledge....this man has a lot of wealth, this man has a good ideas. Every blessing which Allaah has bestowed upon a slave could come as suggestions of haughtiness.

Pride is: being amazed with oneself with manifestation of that apparently on the body. As it is mentioned in the hadeeth:

"Whoever drags his thawb arrogantly.." ¹⁵

Being amazed with oneself should take place in the heart only, if it manifests on the body then it is haughtiness, arrogance, and pride.

His saying: For indeed it is hypocrisy and pride.....

Explanation

As for it being pride then that is clear to see, as for his saying that it is hypocrisy then that is because the person is showing something bigger than what it is in reality. This is exactly how a hypocrite is, he appears to be a sincere adviser but he is not that in reality.¹⁶

His saying: Amongst the things that Imaam Ad-Dhahabee narrated in the biography of Amir ibn al Aswad al Ansee....

Explanation

The disease of tyranny or oppression is "pride." The Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) explained it clearly, and completely when he said:

"Pride is disdaining the truth (out of self conceit) and contempt for the people" ¹⁷

Disdaining the truth means – repelling it, not accepting it.
Contempt for the people means – belittling them, scornfully,

His saying: "Indeed Pride, and greed, and jealousy were the first sins that Allaah was disobeyed with."

He means by this, as we know the first to disobey Allaah was Shaytaan when Allaah, The Most High, ordered him to prostrate to Aadam (may Allaah's peace be upon him) however pride prevented him from that, he refused and was arrogant and said:

"Shall I prostate to one whom you created from soil"
[Al-Israa' (17):61]

¹⁵ Narrated by Bukhaaree (5784) and Muslim (2085)

¹⁶ T.N – concealing what he truly believes, what he truly is.

¹⁷ Narrated by Muslim (91)

and he said:

"This is the one you preferred over me"
[Al-Israa' (17):62]

and he said:

"I am better than him you created me from fire and you created him from soil" [Al-A'raaf (7):12]

His saying; the first sin which Allaah was disobeyed with.....

Explanation

This is as far as we know, if not then Allaah, glory be to Him, The Most High, said to the angels:

"Verily, I am going to place (mankind) generations after generations on earth." They said: "Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood, - while we glorify You with praises and thanks (Exalted be You above all that they associate with You as partners) and sanctify You." [Al-Baqarah (2):30]

The people of knowledge say that the angels said this because there was a nation on the earth before Aadam and his children. They used to cause corruption in the earth and spill blood.

Then he mentioned an example in his saying: so your loftiness over your teacher is pride.....

Explanation

Your loftiness over your teacher could be with your tongue and it could also be with irritation, he could be walking with his teacher and strutting, prancing along saying I did this and I did that. Also your non-acceptance of that which will benefit you in regards to the knowledge of pride. Some students have fallen into this, if someone less than him in knowledge informs him of something, he becomes arrogant and rejects it.

His saying: And your shortcoming in practising your knowledge.....

Explanation

We ask Allaah to save us from this, this is a type of arrogance. That one does not act upon his knowledge.

His saying: Knowledge wars against the lofty youth...

Explanation

Meaning that it is not possible for a lofty youth to attain knowledge because knowledge is at war against him just as the flood attacks the high places. This is true about a high place when it is attacked by a flood from the right and the left but it cannot reach it and settle on it.

His saying: So adhere – may Allaah have mercy upon you – to sticking to the ground and pitying yourself ...

Explanation

These phrases are qualities of the salaf, like this one, who was seeking humbleness, not despair of Allaah's mercy. When they see what they are upon they fear and take heed and then such statements come from them. If that were not the case then in the first instance it is upon the person to have a good thought of Allaah even in this situation.

And this is Arafa, the place of submission, humbleness to Allaah and it is the place of seeking forgiveness. Where one should say for example: Allaah did not make easy for me to come to this place except so that he may forgive me then he asks him for forgiveness and Allaah, glory be to Him, The Most High says:

"And your lord said supplicate to me and I will answer you."
[Ghaafir (40):60]

But these types of statements were repeatedly said by the salaf out of humbleness and having a bad thought of the soul not Allaah, glory be to Him, The Most High.

POINT 6: Contentment and Zuhud (Asceticism) Adorn yourself with contentment and asceticism. And the reality of Zuhud is.....¹⁸

Explanation

Adorning oneself with contentment is from the most important qualities of a student of knowledge. He should be content with what Allaah has given him. He should not ask to be of the rich and arrogant, because some students of knowledge and other than them desire to be amongst the ranks of the rich and arrogant so they over burden themselves in expense, in eating, drinking, clothing and furniture, then they sink like them into debt. This is a mistake, upon you is to be content, for that is the best provision for a Muslim.

His saying: And the reality of Zuhud is.....

Explanation

It is as though he meant from the word zuhud –War'a¹⁹ - because there is War'a and Zuhud²⁰ and Zuhud is a higher station than War'a.

War'a is leaving that which will harm your hereafter, and Zuhud is leaving that which will not benefit your hereafter. There is a difference between them both.

The difference between them both: are the areas where there is no harm and no benefit. War'a is fear of Allaah that does not abstain from this, but Zuhud does.

His saying: it was narrated that Imaam Ash-Shaafi'ee (may Allaah have mercy on him), if a person sincerely....

Explanation

Allaahu Akbar!!! if he said this: I advised the most wisest of people, to be like who?? Like the Zuhaad (ascetic people). This is because the ascetic people are

¹⁸ Siyar Al-A'lam An-Nubula (4/534) also the same speech from Shaykhul-Islaam Ibnu Taymiyyah (may Allaah have mercy upon him) in Majmoo al Fataawa (14/160)

¹⁹ Awareness of Allaah, The Most High

²⁰ Asceticism

the most wisest people, because they abstain from all that which will not benefit them in the hereafter.

What he meant, may Allaah have mercy upon him, by this statement of his, is that the advice is not to be completely and solely like the Zuhaad all the time.

Because advice, Awqaaf ²¹ and Bihaat ²² and Rahoon ²³ and other than that returns to the meaning that is in the custom of the people. So if the wisest person in our customs were the Zuhaad then he would say to be like them, if it were those that displayed the maroo'a ²⁴, or waq'aar ²⁵, or kar'am ²⁶ with their wealth and selves, then he would advise to emulate them.

His saying: It was narrated that when it was said to Mohammed ibn al Hasan ash Shaybanee.....

Explanation

This is because whoever understands transactions will protect himself from the haraam and seeks only the halaal, for indeed this is the Zaahid.

His saying: So upon this the student should be moderate in his lifestyle in a way that does not dishonour him by maintaining himself and those who are dependent upon him so he does not put himself in a position of humility and shame

Our Shaykh Muhammad Al-Ameen Ash-Shanqeetee who died in 17/12/1393 (May Allaah have mercy upon him) took very little of this worldly life and I witnessed this myself, he could not differentiate between notes of the same currency. He once addressed me with his saying: "I have come from the land of Shanqeet ²⁷ and with me is a treasure very seldom found in the possession of anyone, and that is contentment. If I wanted high status then I know the way to it but I will not exchange this worldly life for the hereafter and I will not abandon knowledge to strive to achieve worldly desires." So may Allaah have mercy on him, great mercy - Ameen

Explanation

This is the words from Shaykh Shanqeetee (may Allaah have mercy upon him) resembling people of knowledge, they do not desire by that to give themselves credit but they want by it to benefit the creation, and the people to emulate them, and be upon this path. Because we know them, they were not looking for accrediting themselves rather they are the furthest people from that. And he, may Allaah have mercy on him, was as Shaykh Bakr mentioned, from the Zuhaad. If you saw him he would not say except that he was a man from the desert. Even the cloak, you find he wore a normal cloak it had no embroidery. Also you find he was not concerned about himself or his thawb being smart and neat, may Allaah have mercy on him.

²¹ T.N – This is a bequeath as a religious endowment

²² T.N - insert

²³ T.N - insert

²⁴ T.N - This is the general actions, manners and character that is accepted amongst the customs of the people. It is one who does not perform anything which opposes the accepted mannerism of those people.

²⁵ T.N – This means awe

²⁶ T.N - This is noble and kindness – with ones wealth of self.

²⁷ Mauritania

POINT SEVEN: Adorn yourself with the splendour of knowledge

To adorn yourself with the splendour of knowledge is to have beautiful manners, pious conduct, such as continual peacefulness, awe, humility, humbleness, adhesion to the clear path; by filling one's outer and inner self (with these qualities) and leaving all the characteristics that appose them.

Explanation

This could be a branch of what has preceded, because good manners and pure guidance are from continual peace, awe, humility, and humbleness and filling one's outer self with qualities displaying guidance, which has been previously pointed out, that it is imperative for a student of knowledge to be a righteous example in these things.

His saying: It was narrated that Ibnu Seereen, may Allaah have mercy on him said,

"They (i.e the salaf) use to learn manners as they would learn the knowledge."

And it was narrated that Rajaa ibn al Haywah, may Allaah have mercy on him, once said to a man. "Narrate (i.e hadeeth) and do not narrate to me through a person who is lifeless or a slanderer." Narrated by al Khateeb in Al-Jaami' and then he commented ²⁸ further by saying: "It is incumbent upon the seeker of hadeeth to refrain from play, idle fiddling, and displaying vulgar manners in the gathering by acting foolishly, giggling, laughing loudly, or excessive in continual joking. Joking is only permissible if it is in small amounts, and if it is occasional, and subtle, and the type that does not exceed the boundaries of good manners and the way of knowledge. As for continual joking and that which is vulgar and foolish and that which arouses bitter feeling and attracts evil, then it is blameworthy. Excessive laughing and joking degrades your rank and your honour..."

Explanation

This is from the best words that have been mentioned about a student of knowledge that he should abstain from playing and joking except for that which the Shari'ah has sanctioned, like playing archery, sword fighting, horse riding, because that will aid him in fighting for the sake of Allaah. Also in this present time playing with small traditional rifles, there is no problem with that. Also idle fiddling which is to indulge into something which there is no call for, or say something for no need. Also displaying vulgar manners in a gathering by acting foolishly, giggling, laughing loudly or excessive or continual joking – even with the general people. As for with your fellow companions or contemporaries then the matter is easier, but in front of the general people I warn you from opening the door of trial on yourself. Because that will take the respect away from the hearts of the people, so they will not respect you, or the knowledge that you come with.

His saying: There is a saying: "Whoever is excessive in something will be recognised by it." So avoid these flaws in your gatherings and in your speech. Amongst those that are ignorant there are some that think that there is relaxation in doing this excessively.

²⁸ Al Jaami' 1/156

It was narrated that Ahnaf Ibnu Qays said: "Preserve your gatherings from the mention of women and food for indeed I hate a man who describes his private parts and his stomach." ²⁹

Explanation

This is because it will busy him with other than seeking of knowledge. Like for example he would say: "I ate food last night until my stomach was full," and similar statements to that effect of which there is no need for. He may speak about that which is concerning women. As for if he spoke about that which concerned him personally regarding himself and his family then he is from the level of the most evil of people in the sight of Allaah on the day of judgement.

His saying: And in the judicial book of the inspired speaker the commander of the believers, Umar Ibn al-Khattaab said: "...And adorns himself with other than that which he possesses then Allaah will disfigure him." ³⁰ Refer back to Ibnul-Qayyim's explanation.³¹

Explanation

He means by (Judicial) Umar Ibnul-Khataab (may Allaah be pleased with him) because the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"If there is amongst you judicial person then it is Umar"

And he means by (inspired) the one whom Allaah inspires like as though he is speaking from revelation. This posed as a problem for some scholars, as they said: This dictates that Umar is the best companion, because the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"if there is amongst you a judicial person then it is Umar"

But Shaykhul-Islaam Ibnu Taymiyyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) answered this by stating that Umar reached the correct answer by an intermediary (meaning inspiration from Allaah) as for Abu Bakr (may Allaah be pleased with him) he arrived at the correct answer without any intermediary so because of this Abu Bakr is better than Umar. Whoever contemplates Abu Bakr's independent actions in places of hardship would see he was closer to the truth than Umar, so in the book of Suhh which took place between the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) and the Quraish, Umar went back to the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) to question him about it and the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) answered him, then he went to Abu Bakr and questioned him, and Abu Bakr replied to Umar with exactly the same words as the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) used letter for letter.

Also in the battle against the apostates ³² and also the despatch of the army of Usaamah bin Zaid,³³ also keeping the unity of the Muslims firm at the time of the

²⁹ Siyar Al-A'lam An-Nubula 4/94 (he means his desires)

³⁰ There is a hadeeth narrated by Asmaa (radiyallaahu anha) that the messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "He who fills himself with that which he is not given is as one who wears two garbs of falsehood." (Bukhaaree, Muslim, Abu Dawood, An-Nasaa'i) and the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) in this hadeeth is making a similitude between this type of person who shows off qualities that he/she does not possess with the one who gives false testimony because in effect both of them give false testimony.

³¹ I'laam Al-Muwaqi'een (2/161-162)

³² T.N - Those that said they would not pay Zakaat after the Prophet's (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) death, because he was a prophet and the one who used to take it from them

Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) death, all this shows that Abu Bakr views were more precise than Umar. That which makes Umar Ibnul-Khattaab apparent is his long Khilaafah and his taking care of the general and specific needs of the Muslims, he had become well known for that so for this reason we say which one narrates more ahadeeth Abu Bakr or Abu Hurairah?

Abu Hurairah. Does that mean Abu Hurairah attained... more ahadeeth than Abu Bakr? No.... Abu Bakr did not always say that which he narrated from the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) and Abu Bakr was his close companion summer and winter, day and night, when travelling or not. He was the one who met him the most, the most knowledgeable person about his affairs but he did not make time to sit with the people to narrate to them what he heard from the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam).

In conclusion: Then this clarifies the answer about the hadeeth: "if there is amongst you a judicial person then it is Umar"

His saying, in his book which he wrote to Abu Musa Al-Ashari regarding Qadhaa³⁴

"...whoever adorns himself with other than that which he possesses then Allaah will disfigure him."

Explanation

This is reality, if a person was to pretend that he was a student of knowledge then think he has such great knowledge that he could (concur mountains) every time an issue would come to him he would roll up his sleeves and say I am an expert in this issue, this is halal and this is haram, this is waajib and this is fardu kifaayah and that is fardu ain, these are its conditions so and so, and this one has no conditions. He generalises and specifies, then a small student of knowledge comes to him and says: But we have been informed so and so, then by Allaah he exposes and clearly shows that he was not a student of knowledge. The same applies to one who beautifies himself with worship and appears to the people as though he is a devoted worshipper, Allaah will indeed expose him. **A poet said:**

"And whatever bad character a person has, if he tries to conceal it, it will be exposed to the people."

So whatever the people hide Allaah indeed knows it and he will indeed expose the one who does not act accordingly. This was a phrase from Umar, so adorn with it all your actions.

"...Whoever adorns himself with other than that which he possesses then Allaah will disfigure him."

now he is dead they saw no reason to give it to anyone else. Amongst them were Munafiqoon as well as those who viewed the issue of Zakaat as mentioned above.

³³ Before the death of the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) he sent Usaamah Bin Zaid on an expedition with a huge army, whilst he was on his way the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) died. Then Abu Bakr had the battle of the apostates on his hand, Umar told him to bring the Army of Usaamah Bin Zaid back to aid them, but Abu Bakr said: "No I will never stop an army sent by the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam). The wisdom of his saying became apparent because in the route of Usaamah Bin Zaid he had to pass through lots of tribes who had refused to pay Zakaat and when they saw him with his huge army they became afraid and said: "if this is one army Abu Bakr has sent here, so huge, then their must be more.. so for us to pay Zakat is better than being killed."

³⁴ Book of Judicial Rulings

The Shaykh Bakr Abu Zaid, may Allaah give him towfeeq,³⁵ said: "..Refer back to Ibnul-Qayyim's explanation"

Ibnul-Qayyim explained it in great depth in his book I'laam Al-Muwaqi'een to the extent that you would say: "The whole book which is 3 huge volumes was an explanation of this hadeeth." It was not just an explanation of each word, rather it was explanation of each word from one angle but from another it explained the meanings and displayed the wisdom. So that is why Bakr Abu Zaid said to refer back to Ibni-Qayyim's explanation.

POINT EIGHT: His saying: Adorn yourself with honour (Maroo'a) and that which leads to it such as good manners a cheerful face, spreading the salam, (the salutation) showing forbearance and hating haughtiness, having self esteem which is free from tyranny, and being gallant but not for the sake of zealous partisanship and being fanatic without being patriotic.

Explanation

What is Maroo'a? The people of understanding have explained it, may Allaah have mercy on them in the book of 'shahadaat' they said it was those actions that beautify and make attractive and abstaining from that which blackens and disfigures.

That is in general: everything which beautifies him in the sight of the people and makes him attractive and that which causes the people to praise him, then that is Maroo'a, even if it was not acts of worship, and everything that is opposite to that is contradictory to Maroo'a.

Then he³⁶ gave an example of this, so he said: "good manners"

Explanation

What are good manners? That a person should always be pardoning in places where pardon is required, and he should be unwavering in a place where that is required.

So for this reason Islam came as a balance between pardoning which causes rights to be lost, and unwavering which may lead to oppression. So we will give an example from 'the law of equality in punishment'³⁷ where a person kills another. It is mentioned that the children of Israel split their legislation of 'equality in punishment' into two. One part made an obligation to kill (the one who killed) with no choice involved for the family members of the killed - and that is the legislation of the Tawrah, because the legislations of the Tawrah lean towards harshness and firmness.

The second part made it an obligation to pardon and said: if a person is killed intentionally it is an obligation upon the family members to pardon. This is what

³⁵ Ability to carry out, precisely what he intends

³⁶ Shaykh Bakr Abu Zaid

³⁷ T.N – This is known from the Shari'ah as Qisaas (Law of Equality In Punishment) as Allaah, The Most High said in Soorah Al-Baqarah (2):178: "**O you who believe, Qisaas has been prescribed for you in taking of lives, the free person for the free, the slave for the slave, the female for a female, and if any remission is made by the brother of the slain then grant any reasonable demand and compensate him with handsome gratitude..”**

we read in the books which have been related. We did not come across any text in the Bible, and in any case the legislation of the Bible is the legislation of the Tawrah and Allaah, glory be to Him, The Most High said:

"And we ordained for them in it that a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth and wounds equal for equal..." [Al-Maa'adah (5):45]

But that which was transmitted from the children of Israel is what we mentioned above. Then the religion of Islam came with the middle path and gave the choice to the family members of the killed, if they desired they could take his life out of 'equality in punishment' that was their right, or if they so desired they could pardon him without taking any blood money, or if they wished they could take the blood money.

So this issue became extensive. It is well known that any intelligent person would look into the choices available. He would choose that which has the better general interest, and put that forward before everything.

For example if that person was evil, I mean a murderer, and the family of the killed love wealth and say we want to forgive him and take the blood money, because we are in need and we do not have wealth. We say: "This is not from wisdom, look at the general interest, and if you leave something for the sake of Allaah, He would repay you with better than it, so kill this murderer." This is also why Shaykhul-Islaam Ibnu Taymiyyah made it an obligation, following Imaam Maalik (may Allaah have mercy on him) that it is an obligation to kill the murderer. Even if the family of the killed wanted to pardon him and even if he had small ones that were in need of wealth. It is an obligation to kill the murderer because it is not possible to free yourself from him. This is when a person is killed in a situation where it is not possible for him to defend himself and the murderer is one who spreads corruption in the earth.

"Verily the recompense for the one who wages war against Allaah and his messenger and spreads corruption in the earth is that they are killed, or crucified, or their arms and legs are cut off from opposite sides or they are expelled from the earth (land)." [Al-Maa'adah (5):33]

His saying: A cheerful face...

Explanation

This is also from good manners, but does that mean I should have a cheerful face for everyone, even the wicked criminal? Or does it depend on the situation? So do I make a cheerful face to 6 out of 9...what does this mean? It means out of thirty, leave three dependent on the situation.

So from your character will be a cheerful face. This is the best thing, it will attract the people to you and the people will love you and they will force open their secrets to you.³⁸ But if you were stern biting your lower lip the people will flee from you and not be able to speak to you. However if the situation dictates that you should not show a cheerful face, then do not do so. So for this reason a person who displays sternness should not be blameworthy at all times, neither is he praised for leaving that at all times.

³⁸T.N- This is because they are yearning for advice and guidance, but are afraid to open their secrets to anyone.

His saying: Spread salaams...

Explanation

Meaning spreading it everywhere, making it apparent to everyone? I am asking here.. of course not, it should only be performed on the one that deserves to be given salam: the Muslim, even if he was disobedient, even if he were a fornicator, thief, one that deals in interest, or drinks alcohol, or if he was a sinner. Give him salaam because of the saying of the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam):

"It is not permissible for a Muslim to abandon his Muslim brother for more than three (days), then they meet and this one turns away from that one and vice versa. The best of them is the one that starts with salam first." ³⁹

If a believer performed an evil deed, even if it was a major bad deed but it was feared that he was going to split the Muslim community in such a case boycotting him is an obligation - if it is beneficial.

I say this, just in case one would rebut our saying with the story of Ka'ab Bin Maalik (may Allaah be pleased with him), when he remained behind in the battle of Tabook. The Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) ordered him to be abandoned, so the people abandoned him, they did not speak to him, until one day he secretly entered the garden of Abu Qataadah (may Allaah be pleased with him) and he was his cousin from the most beloved people to him, so he gave salaam to Abu Qatadah and he did not reply the salaam, so he tried a second time but he did not reply, then he tried a third time but he still did not reply. Then Ka'ab said: I call you to witness do you know that I love Allaah and his Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam)? How can you boycott me when I love Allaah and his Messenger? He did not reply. He did not reply with a yes or no.. he said Allaah and his Messenger know best!! He did not reply with "Why?" because the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) ordered them to do this. If he had ordered them to do more than this they would have done it.

The point is that the companions boycotted him because he remained behind in the battle of Tabook and their boycotting of him was upon the order of the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam). So he came and gave salaam to the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) and said: I don't know if his lips moved to return my salaam?

But the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) loved him, because when Ka'ab would stand to pray the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) would steal a glance at him and look at him. So this abandonment of Ka'ab by the companions did it have effects on him or not? It did have an effect....a great repentance to Allaah, The Most High as Allaah confirms:

"And (He did forgive also) the three [who did not join the Tabûk expedition (whom the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam))] left (i.e. he did not give his judgement in their case, and their case was suspended for Allaah's Decision) till for them the earth, vast as it is, was straitened and their own selves were straitened to them, and they perceived that there is no fleeing from Allaah, and no refuge but with Him. Then, He accepted their repentance, that they might repent (unto Him)." [At-Taubah (9):118]

So they resorted to Allaah and Allaah realised them (from their trial).

³⁹ Narrated by Bukhaaree in Adaab Al-Mufrad p416

In conclusion: spreading salaam, the general ruling is that it is for everyone from the Muslims except for the one who displays his sins and it is in his better interest that he is boycotted.

As for non Muslims then the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Do not start the salaam with the Jews and the Christians." [Muslim no.2167]

So it is haraam for us to start the salam with the Jews and the Christians, and those other than them are more filthy so we do not start with salaam to them. If they start with salaam to us then we reply to them because of the saying of Allaah, The Most High:

"And if you are given a greeting, then return it with a better greeting or return the same." [An-Nisaa' (4):86]

So if they say "Assalaamu alaykum" then we say clearly: "Alaykumu salaam" because the verse states that: **"..then return it with a better greeting or return the same."** and the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) ordered us to say "wa alaykum" because they used to say "saam alaykum" as is narrated in the hadeeth of Abdullaah Ibnu Umar that he said:

"Verily the Jews or the people of the book say Saam alaykum so if they give this greeting then say wa alaykum."⁴⁰

Is there any exception to that? Yes: the students, to one another they are exempt from this. Meaning a student does not need to spread salaam to his brothers, colleagues, friends, because of the good manners he possesses (maroo' a) and pure heart. Giving salaam is a greeting and showing of happiness and acceptance. So there is no need for them to say "the pureness of my heart is in no need for expression" so what do you say about this exemption?

This exemption is Baatil (false) the students amongst themselves have more rights to salaams. Another exemption is given by some, when some people oppose you in the manhaj but agree with you in aim.

Nowadays, we have the horn blowers – and we will not say partisans – where some of them have a belonging to one group over others, but if only some of them where saved from the others, rather they are opposite (they fight each other) and Allaah's refuge is sought, fighting each other with their tongues and I don't know if they would fight each other with swords or not if they could? Allaah knows best, but with their tongues they fight. Some of them curse one another, others keep away from others and they spend so much time in numerous gatherings defaming other groups even though their aim is one, all of them want one goal, correction of worship and acceptance from Allaah. There could be clear people of innovation opposing the Sunnah yet they do not speak about them. This is the effort we experienced from some horn blowers where every group adheres to something specific or a specific minhaj so you find some making others astray and this is the effort. So for the likes of such horn blowers it is an obligation to give salaams to each other. It is an obligation for them to advise one another. Each one of them should clarify for his brother what he is mistaken in so he can correct that mistake and the hearts can come together.

⁴⁰ Bukhaaree (6257) and Muslim (2163) – T.N – It is worth mentioning here that it is permissible to return salaam to the non Muslims if they start, and we only say "wa alaykum" if they say "saam alaykum" in opposition to many people these days who refuse to return salaams to non muslims even when they do not say "saam alaykum".

As for turning hearts against each other, and Allaah's refuge is sought, because of differing in minhaj even though the aim is the same then this is a grave mistake.

His saying: "Therefore avoid the affairs that tarnish your honour, whether it be in your nature, speech, or actions: and also indulging in degrading actions, or evil habits such as being conceited, showing off, boastfulness, arrogance, and looking down upon others, and to be seen in doubtful places."

Explanation

This is why he mentioned Maroo`a (good manners, honour) it is imperative that a student of knowledge adorns himself with this. He said "avoid" lowly manners in your character, or speech, or actions meaning in your nature. Try and make your natural disposition in accordance to good manners. From that which is known is that when you see one with kohl at the ends of the eyelid it does not mean kohl is being used! ⁴¹ And a natural disposition is not like a disposition. But a person with regular practice of some thing perhaps can gain a natural disposition if not then the person no matter how much he tries to have good manners but his nature is not that way inclined he will find much difficulty, but with practice he will become better and that has been proven. We heard about some people that were far from being seekers of knowledge or students of knowledge, they had evil characters, then when Allaah blessed them with knowledge and guidance their manners became good because they made themselves accustomed to this good character until it became part of their nature, and natural disposition.

His saying: "and also indulging into degrading actions and evil habits.."

Explanation

By (evil) habits he means qualities, characteristics and traits, everything which perverts a person's action. Then he gave an example of that saying: such as being conceited. ⁴² So if he extracted a benefit he says: "Mashaa' Allaah, the greatest scholar has not extracted this benefit," then he becomes proud and thinks of himself as someone big and is arrogant.

His saying: "Showing off"

Explanation

He does (actions) to be in the view of the people and speaking about various sciences in front of them until they see that he is a scholar. Then it is said he is a scholar.

His saying: "Boastfulness"

Explanation

Rejecting the truth, this happens in argumentation and extremeness to one opinion over many or one madhab over others. You find him despising others. He rejects the truth because it opposes his opinion.

His saying: "Arrogance" ⁴³

⁴¹ An Arabic example which when elaborated it means placing kohl (black coloring) around the edges of the eyelid is less (in colour) than the kohl itself (in colouring)

⁴² Being amazed with oneself

⁴³ Again this is conceit, pride.

Explanation

This is the result of being amazed with oneself. Meaning he makes himself appear as though he is a scholar that has a great deal of knowledge. From that is, in some countries the scholars wear a particular dress, so this beginner in his knowledge wears the dress of the major scholars, to make one think he is from the major scholars, this is from arrogance, pride.

His saying: "and looking down upon others"

Explanation

Boastfulness is looking down upon others. It is pride as the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Pride is disdaining the truth (out of self conceit) and contempt for the people" ⁴⁴

Meaning: scornfully.

His saying: "or to be seen in doubtful places"

Explanation

Places which are places of doubt that will place doubt in his Maroo'a, his character, he must avoid them. May Allaah have mercy on the one that prevents backbiting about himself.

If the Messenger (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam), who is the purest of creation, said to the two men from the Ansaar, when he was with his wife Safiyyah:

"Verily she is Safiyyah, my wife"

then what about other than him?

In conclusion: don't be confident in yourself that people do not think bad about you in anything. Even if you had that good feature amongst the people, shaytaan will hurl into their hearts evil until they accuse you of that which you are free from. So abstain from the places of doubt so that you will be saved from being doubted.

POINT NINE: His saying: Enjoy masculine qualities; which include bravery, forthrightness, noble manners, and giving for the sake of good causes until the ambition of men (die) before reaching your level. Equally beware of the qualities that oppose them such as being unconfident, impatient and weak in nobility for indeed they destroy knowledge and cut off the tongue from speaking the truth, and they lead him headlong to his enemies in a state where they brush the faces of the pious amongst the slaves with their poison.

Explanation

This is like a completion of the point before, because enjoying masculine qualities is from Maroo'a without no doubt. If a person was to bring himself down to the level of men, those that are really men, from the meaning of the word, then he would enjoy what has been mentioned of bravery, forthrightness, and noble

⁴⁴ Narrated by Muslim (91)

manners and giving for the sake of good causes until the ambition of men (die) before reaching your level. Meaning, no one would be bothered in beating you, in that what you are upon, of these qualities. So bravery is advancing in the correct place of advancing. If that is what bravery is then it necessitates that deep thought, contemplation and worldly experiences precede it. This is why Al Mutanabi⁴⁵ said:

Thinking before fearlessness is bravery
It comes first, and then bravery is second,
And if these two qualities come together in a free soul,
It would reach the heights of all ambitions.

So thought is a must, because fearlessness without thinking will collapse and its result will be opposite to what is desired by the bold. Likewise forthrightness for truth, in that he should be strong regarding it, patient with the recompense of harm or otherwise that comes for defending the truth.

His saying: noble manners – explanation about this has preceded, and that it compromises of all noble, good character which a person is praised for.

His saying: and giving for the sake of good causes - this giving includes giving of wealth, dignity, honour, and knowledge and all that is given (of good) to others.

As for giving for the sake of evil then that is evil, and giving which is not for the sake of good or evil could be like wasting wealth.

POINT TEN: Forsaking luxury

His saying: Do not become carried away in comfort and luxury; for asceticism is from Eemaan⁴⁶ and take the advice of the Commander of the believers, Umar Ibn Al-Khattaab in his famous book, and in it he says:

“So beware of excessive comfort, and imitating the appearance of the ajam (non Arab)⁴⁷ and toughen yourselves and roughen yourselves.”⁴⁸

⁴⁵ He is a poet during the era of Abu Tayib Ahmad Bin Hussain Bin Hasan Al-Jaafi Al-Koofi Al-Adeeb. He is known as Mutanabi he reached..... his poems reached the horizons, he died in Ramadaan in the year 354 Hijri (Siyar Al-A'lam An-Nubula 16/199-201)

⁴⁶ As it was authenticated to the Prophet refer to Silsilah As-Saheehah no. 341 and Tahdheeb Qadr as Salaat no.343 by Ibn Nasr Al-Murwazee.

⁴⁷ This statement is not considered as Pro Arab nationalism, rather it refers to – in the terminology of the salaf – the non Muslim Arabs that the salaf came into contact with when Islaam began to spread to places like Asia, Persia etc. The proof of this is in another narration in Saheeh Muslim "...and beware of imitating the people of shirk." This explanation was held by Al-Imaam Al-Qurtubee and Imaam An-Nawawi in their explanation of Saheeh Muslim. An example of such is in the manner in which these Ajam use to tie their turbans: without a tail (behind their backs or on their chests) or without a hat underneath it (as the Raafidha – the zealous shi'ites or the followers of the twelve Imaams - do today) and not bringing it underneath the chin, along with many other examples. So it comes under the category of the prohibition of imitating the Kuffaar.

NOTE: Now this is established it becomes apparent to the reader the common mistake that many Muslims make when wearing the turban: they do not wear a hat underneath it, nor do they tie it with a tail between their shoulders and bringing it beneath their chins. Tying the turban in this manner was considered a sign of the pious people of the sunnah as Ibnu Raslaan said. It was also narrated that some of the Salaf used to say: "The turban without a tail is the turban of Iblees (Satan)." and some of them said it was the Turban of the dhimmi (the kaafir under the rule of the Muslims) and Imaam Abu Bakr at-Tartooshee used to say: "tying the turban without a tail, without bringing it beneath the chin is an evil bid'ah (innovation)." For more information refer to Iqtidaa As-Siraatul-Mustaqeem by Shaykhul Islaam Ibnu Taymiyyah and Nayl Al-Awtaar of Imaam Ash-Showkaani.

Explanation

His saying: Do not become carried away in comfort and luxury: This is advice said to both student of knowledge and a non student of knowledge. Being carried away in that is in opposition to the guidance of the Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam), as he used to prohibit too much luxury, and sometimes instruct to walk bare foot. A person who is used to luxury, facing some things will be difficult for him. Some things may come to him that he is unable to have luxury in. We will give an example of this from the hadeeth we mentioned: The Prophet (sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) "used to instruct us to walk bare foot sometimes."

Some people never walk bare foot ever, they wear socks and khuff⁴⁹ and you won't even find them walking. Such a person if he had to walk 500 metres without any form of protection for him you would find that it would be extremely difficult for him. Perhaps his feet will bleed from walking on the ground, but had he made himself used to roughness and left off permanent luxury he would have achieved much good. Also, the body if it is not used to these things it will not have immunity and you will find it in pain over anything. Whereas if it had immunity it would not bother him. That is why you find the hands of labour workers much stronger than the hands of a student of knowledge. There is no immunity in his hands because it has become use to that (knowledge and easy work). So much so that in the old days the labourers, their hands use to mix with soil and clay and if you were to touch them it was as though you touched a rock, because of its roughness, if he were to clutch his fingers on your hand you would feel extreme pain because he has become used to that. So a person that makes himself comfortable no doubt it will be harmful to him.

His saying: Ascetism is from Imaan

Explanation:

So what is asceticism? It is opposite of living a life of luxury

His saying: beware of imitating the Ajam (non Arab)

Explanation

This sentence is a warning, because the Arabs have two types of sentences one type of sentence is a warning the other is appealing. So if the meaning of the sentence consisted of wanting something then it is the second type of sentence (appealing) and if the meaning consists of a warning then it is the first type of sentence (warning). Like if you said to a person: "A lion! A lion!" Then this would be a warning. And if you said: "A deer! A deer!" This is appealing but as for - beware! Then this is a warning.

Ibnu Maalik said:

Beware of evil and its likes
Warning of

His saying: beware of living a life of luxury

Explanation

⁴⁸ This athaar was narrated by Muslim, Aboo Awaanah, Abdur Razzaaq and others. It was originally narrated by Al-Bukhaaree, but was a shorter narration.

⁴⁹ This is a sock made of leather which is worn on the feet.

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Meaning, I am warning you not to live a life of comfort, like in clothes, body, and in everything, and what is meant here is excessiveness. Living in comfort from that which Allaah has made halaal, with no wasting, is from the things that are praiseworthy. Whoever abandons comfort which Allaah has made halaal without any Shari'ah reason then he is blameworthy.

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